

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Virginia	
COUNTY: Northampton	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME	
COMMON: Sommers House	
AND/OR HISTORIC: Sommers House	

2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: .6 mi. SE of Rt. 183, .2 mi. SW of intersection of Rt. 183 and Rt. 691.			
CITY OR TOWN: Jamesville vicinity			
STATE Virginia	CODE 45	COUNTY: Northampton	CODE 131

3. CLASSIFICATION			
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY			
OWNER'S NAME: Oscar H. Smith			
STREET AND NUMBER: 			
CITY OR TOWN: Jamesville	STATE: Virginia	CODE 45	

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Northampton County Court House			
STREET AND NUMBER: 			
CITY OR TOWN: Eastville	STATE: Virginia	CODE 45	

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS			
TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic American Buildings Survey			
DATE OF SURVEY: 1940	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> State	<input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Library of Congress			
STREET AND NUMBER: 			
CITY OR TOWN: Washington	STATE: D.C.	CODE 08	

STATE: Virginia	COUNTY: Northampton	ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Torn down, no date

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Sommers House is a small, one-and-a-half story rectangular structure of brick laid in Flemish bond, and covered by a steep gable roof with dormers. Rubbed brick is employed at the corners of the house and around all the openings, with gauged work in the flat arches above most of the windows. The fine brickwork is set off by a rich use of glazed headers which form a diamond pattern in the apex of the north gable and are employed in a very rare fashion in the corners of the chimneys. A superb modillion cornice survives at the base of the roof on both the front and rear. The entrances to the house were originally located in the center bay of both the east and west elevations, and the original west entrance appears to have been topped by a gauged-work semicircular arch. Both entrances were moved to the southern most bays of each side in the nineteenth century when the original plan was changed to a side hall plan. The original plan is difficult to determine, but apparently it was a hall-and-parlor scheme with the one behind the other instead of the more usual side-by-side arrangement. Unfortunately, little original interior woodwork remains except for a paneled end wall in the northeast chamber and some doors in the upstairs rooms. Little indication of the form or original location of the staircase remains. An early, but not original, frame kitchen wing and connecting hyphen were removed from the south end of the house in the mid-twentieth century.

Regrettably, the Sommers House is currently unoccupied and in dilapidated condition, although the structure of the house seems to be reasonably sound.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Pre-Columbian ☐ 16th Century ☒ 18th Century ☐ 20th Century
☐ 15th Century ☐ 17th Century ☐ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The first definite record of the land on which the Sommers House stands appears in 1691 when the northern part of a larger tract of land was given over to Thomas Smith in order to settle an old dispute over the property between Smith's father on the one side, and Argoll Yardley and Thomas Rydeing on the other. There is no indication that a house was standing on the property at the time, and it is known that Smith's own house was located on an adjacent tract. It seems likely that the present house may have been built sometime after 1727 when Thomas Smith gave the land to his grandson, Leaven Smith. The ownership of the property throughout the remainder of the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century is unclear. However, in 1881 the owners, James W. and Mary A. Edmonds, sold the property to a William T. Sommers. Since Sommers' occupancy, the house has been known by his name.

Despite the obscurity of its early history, as well as its unfortunate alterations and poor condition, the Sommers House survives as a very rare example of a significant architectural type once quite prevalent on Virginia's Eastern Shore. Unlike the mainland with its great plantations, the Eastern Shore was divided into many small but prosperous independent farms, and the owners of the farms took as much pride in their small houses as did the planters of the mainland with their mansions. As an example of this phenomenon, the Sommers House has the architectural quality and detail of a Virginia colonial mansion, but is actually built on an almost cottage scale.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Whitelaw, Ralph T., Virginia's Eastern Shore. Vol. One. Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1968.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
NW	Degrees Minutes Seconds 37 ° 29 ' 54 "	Degrees Minutes Seconds 75 ° 57 ' 05 "		Degrees Minutes Seconds ° ' "	Degrees Minutes Seconds ° ' "	
NE	37 ° 29 ' 54 "	75 ° 56 ' 13 "				
SE	37 ° 29 ' 15 "	75 ° 56 ' 13 "				
SW	37 ° 29 ' 15 "	75 ° 57 ' 05 "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 205 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Staff, Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, James W. Moody, Jr., Director	
ORGANIZATION Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission	DATE November 13, 1969
STREET AND NUMBER: Room 1116, Ninth Street State Office Building	
CITY OR TOWN: Richmond	STATE Virginia
	CODE 45

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

<p>As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Dr. Edward P. Alexander, Chairman Title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission</p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____ Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____ Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date _____</p>
--	---

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



